

Behavioral Approaches to Insomnia

Sleep Hygiene

- Exercise regularly (not within 4 hours of bedtime)
- Avoid large meals and limit fluid intake 2 hours before sleep
- Limit caffeine, tobacco and alcohol intake
- Use bedroom for sleep and sex only
- Maintain a regular sleep-wake cycle without daytime napping
- Avoid distracting stimuli at bedtime, such as loud noise, bright lights and extreme temperature variations

Stimulus control

- Lie down to sleep only when feeling sleepy
- Avoid watching TV, talking on phone, eating near bedtime
- Leave bed if can't fall asleep in 20 minutes- return when sleepy
- Wake at same time every morning

Sleep restriction

- Limit time in bed to number of hours actually spent sleeping (not less than 5 hours)
- Sleep time gradually increases as sleep efficiency increases

Paradoxical intention

- Remain awake to lessen anxiety related with pressure to sleep

Relaxation training

- Imagine a calm environment with comforting perception such as warmth and heaviness of limbs
- Focus on pleasant images
- Slowly tense then relax muscles from toes to head
- Focus on nothing but breath in abdomen or your nose

Cognitive therapy

- Use a journal to write down your thoughts- let them go and sleep
- Consider seeing a counselor